

car repairs, illnesses, or high heating bills in unusually cold months.

Elderly people on fixed incomes are resorting to food pantries and soup kitchens in growing numbers. They frequently cite the cost of medical care and prescriptions as competing with their limited food budgets.

At various stops on the tour, we repeatedly heard about the dilemma seniors face when their monthly Social Security checks are eaten up by medical fees and prescriptions, leaving little money for food. As we approached a MacArthur, Ohio food pantry, we observed a line of nearly 1,200 people, mostly senior citizens, waiting along the road to receive a box of food. Inside the pantry, clergy and church volunteers serving this crowd described deplorable living conditions—run-down shacks with no heat or running water, dilapidated trailers with holes in the floor, even chicken coops and buses. We repeatedly heard that their pride and the stigma of accepting charity keep many seniors from asking for help until their situation is truly desperate. As one nun told us, “we know we are really in trouble when the elderly start showing up at pantries in large numbers.”

Part of the “traditional” clientele at food pantries and soup kitchens are those for whom hunger is a symptom of deeper problems—illiteracy, a lack of education, a history of substance or domestic abuse, mental illness, or homelessness. It will be difficult if not impossible for many of these individuals to compete in the job market without intensive rehabilitation, and some of them may never be able to hold jobs.

Everyone who has ever volunteered at a soup kitchen knows these faces—people who may never have been able to hold a job, and are not counted in unemployment data because they are unemployable or have given up trying to find work. This described many of the people we met at the Zanesville soup kitchen we visited—people who have “failed to thrive” and live life on the margins for one reason or another. As one volunteer put it, “with the right kind of help, some of these people may be able to pull themselves up by their boot straps, but a lot of them never had boots to begin with.” And, in the words of a food pantry director, “I am tired of selectively talking about the types of clients we serve, so that people will care. Some of these people are plain old poor folks, who’ve had a hard time getting it together for whatever reason. But they still need to eat.”

Churches and charitable food assistance agencies are doing their best to rise to the challenge of growing demands, but their capacity is overwhelmed by the increased need they are now facing.

In attempts to meet increased needs, every church group and private charity we spoke with had stepped up efforts to raise additional funds through church collections, food drives, pie sales, and appeals to businesses and other donors. Yet, in many cases pantries report having to reduce the amount of food they distribute, or turn people away for lack of food. A Zanesville soup kitchen reported taking out a bank loan for the first time ever last year, to cover operating costs. Within the last year the number of food relief agencies serving the hungry in Ohio reportedly declined by 23% as many closed or consolidated with other operations.

CONCLUSIONS

Our limited sampling of sites serving hungry people, and discussions with charitable food providers, state officials, and advocacy groups, provided only a snapshot of the conditions that are underlying the increases in requests for relief that foodbanks, soup kitchens and pantries are reporting. Yet it confirmed to us, in clear and human terms, disturbing evidence that more of our citizens than ever are vulnerable to hunger, despite a robust economy.

As states work to replace the federal welfare system with structures of their own, the number of people turning to food banks for emergency assistance is growing. New strategies are being tried, many with success, and they need to be encouraged. Food banks have been doing the hard work on the front lines of fighting hunger for decades. They are supported by their communities, and they are the organizations that increasing numbers of citizens turn to for help. But to ensure that Americans who turn to food banks for help do not go hungry, food banks need additional support.

They need the goodwill and charitable contributions of their community, and the participation of more individuals and businesses.

They need public and private initiatives that complement their efforts and address the root causes of hunger and poverty.

They need jobs that pay a living wage and laws that encourage generosity and charitable giving.

And they cannot do without the significant support of federal funds and federal commodity foods.

The job of the federal government was not finished when the welfare reform bill was enacted. Congress and the Administration have a responsibility to monitor what the states are doing, to measure how the poor are faring, and to make adjustments as necessary as problems arise.

Even as we give policy reforms a chance to work and aggressively attack the underlying problems that make people vulnerable to hunger, we cannot stand by and watch growing numbers of Americans go hungry. If, as the evidence suggests, increasing numbers of people are so hungry they’re willing to stand in line for food, we cannot rest knowing that, too often, there is no food at the end of that line.

HONORING GENERAL RAYMOND G. DAVIS

HON. MAC COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 1998

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the American Legion on the occasion of the 79th Anniversary of its founding and to pay homage to General Raymond G. Davis, Medal of Honor recipient and retired Assistant Commandant of the United States Marine Corps. I recently had the honor of introducing General Davis as the keynote speaker at the recent birthday celebration of the Clayton County American Post 258. I enter those remarks in the Congressional Record in honor of the American Legion and General Ray Davis.

THE HONORABLE MAC COLLINS 79TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN LEGION CLAYTON COUNTY AMERICAN LEGION POST 258, MARCH 13, 1998, JONESBORO, GEORGIA

Good evening. It is a real pleasure to be with so many friends here tonight. Thank you Lamar Miller for your kind introductory remarks and for giving me the honor of introducing General Ray Davis, our distinguished speaker this evening. I also want to recognize Clayton County Sheriff Stanley Tuggle, State Representative Greg Hecht, and State Representative Frank Bailey and his wife, Frances. I have known and respected Frank for many years. He is a friend and does a fine job for the people of Clayton County in the Georgia House of Representatives.

And, I want to recognize Mr. James Hugh Lindsey. I had the pleasure of first meeting Mr. Lindsey at a celebration arranged by Mr. Miller on the occasion of his 101st birthday. Mr. Lindsey recently celebrated his 102nd birthday, and I know everyone here this evening joins with me in wishing him many more to come.

We are here tonight to celebrate and honor the 79th anniversary of the founding of the American Legion. When Mr. Miller told me tonight’s dinner was being held to celebrate the founding of the American Legion, I wanted to learn more about the rich history of your organization.

It all began in March 1919 when members of the American Expeditionary Force in Europe held the first caucus in Paris and created an organization for those who have served their country. The official name for the Legion was adopted in May 1919 at a caucus meeting in St. Louis. In September 1919, the organization was officially chartered by the United States Congress. And, in November 1919, the Legion held its first annual convention in Minneapolis where its members adopted the organization’s constitution and set its future course.

From that handful of soldiers in Paris and the founding members at the first convention in Minneapolis, the American Legion today has grown to over 2.9 million members. The programs you sponsor and support touch the lives of so many of your fellow citizens. You are helping to mold the hearts and minds of our nation’s youth with your work with the Boy Scouts of America, your sponsorship of Boys State and Boys Nation, American Legion Baseball, your educational scholarship programs, the Child Welfare Foundation, your Children and Youth Programs and many, many more.

Through your Citizens Flag Alliance, the Legion is working to “protect our history, our pride, our honor and our flag.” And, the American Legion provides valuable input to Congress in writing and passing laws that protect our national security and enhance the lives of all who have served their country. As a Member of Congress, I thank you and your fellow Legionnaires for all that you have given, and continue to give, to your nation.

While I could continue speaking on the wonderful history of the Legion, it is my honor to introduce your keynote speaker who, I believe, best represents the ideals on which the American Legion was founded and for which it stands today. Raymond G. Davis is a son of Georgia. He was born on January 13, 1915 in Fitzgerald, the son of Zelma and Raymond Roy Davis. Following his 1938 graduation from Georgia School of Technology with Honors, Ray Davis began a 33-year career with the United States Marine Corps as a second lieutenant.

During that distinguished career, Ray Davis rose from the rank of second lieutenant to become a four-star general and Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps. While

General Davis may be best known as a recipient of the Medal of Honor while serving as a Battalion Commander during the Korean War, he first saw action in some of the most brutal fighting of World War II. He was part of the Marine forces that participated in the capture and defense of Guadalcanal and the Eastern New Guinea and Cape Gloucester campaigns.

While commanding the 1st Marine Division of the 1st Battalion in September of 1944, then Major Davis was wounded during the first hour of the landing operations. He refused to leave his men and continued to direct the Battalion in establishing defense positions and gaining control of the island. For his actions, Major Davis was awarded the Purple Heart and the Navy Cross.

As a Lieutenant Colonel in Korea from 1950 to 1951, General Davis earned the nation's highest decoration for heroism during the 1st Marine Division's historic fight to break out of the Chosin Reservoir Area. Against overwhelming odds, he led his Battalion in a four-day battle which saved a Marine rifle company and opened a mountain pass for the escape of two trapped Marine regiments. President Harry Truman presented Colonel Davis with the Medal of Honor in ceremonies at the White House on November 24, 1952.

In 1968, then Major General Ray Davis was named Deputy Commanding General of forces in his third and final conflict—the Vietnam War. During that tour, General Davis was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal—the first of two such medals he received. In 1971, General Davis was nominated by the President and confirmed by the United States Senate as the Assistant Commandant of the United States Marine Corps. He served in this position until his retirement in 1972.

In addition to the Medal of Honor, two Distinguished Service Medals, the Navy Cross and Purple Heart, General Davis was awarded two Silver Stars, two Legions of Merit, six Bronze Stars and many other awards from allied governments. Additionally, the forces in which he served received five Presidential Unit Citations, three Navy Unit Commendations and 15 Battle Stars.

After 33 years of traveling the world, seeing action in three wars and serving as one of the nation's highest military officers, Ray Davis could have settled into a comfortable retirement on his farm here in Georgia. But this was not the way for Ray Davis—a man of life-long action and deep commitment to serving others.

Let me quote General Davis on leaving the Marines: "As for retirement being difficult, I had an ideal transition in that I was retired from the Corps at 10 o'clock in the morning in Washington, and I was in my Atlanta office at 2 o'clock that afternoon in charge of the whole state of the Georgia Chamber of Commerce." Ray Davis had returned home as Executive Vice President for one of the premier business organizations in Georgia.

General Davis went on to lead the Georgia Chamber through an exciting time of growth in our state. He later left the Chamber to become President of RGMW, a family-owned land development corporation. General Davis also gave time to activities that are close to his heart. He has served as a trustee in the Valley Forge Military Academy, Chairman of the Trustees for the Marine Military Academy and on the Board of Visitors for Berry College. He was appointed by President Ronald Reagan to the Korean War Veterans Memorial Advisory Board and he is active in many Marine Corps organizations.

Today, General Davis and his wife of over 50 years, Knox, live in Rockdale County. They enjoy traveling and staying active in the many organizations in which General Davis still serves. They also enjoy having

more time for their three children, Raymond Jr., Gordon and Willa, and their grandchildren. Tonight I have touched on the highlights of the extraordinary life and career of General Davis. For more details on this incredible man, I would encourage you to read "The Story of Ray Davis." In fact, we may be able to prevail on the General to autograph copies of his book this evening.

In closing, I want to leave you with a quote from Army General Creighton W. Abrams Jr., commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam, to Marine Commandant General Leonard F. Chapman Jr. General Abrams said of Ray Davis, "... of the 50 or so division commanders I have known in Vietnam, General Davis has no peer. He's the best."

Ray Davis truly does represent the best of American society—soldier, scholar, a man of deeply held beliefs and commitments, and a devoted husband and father. Words cannot express how proud and honored I am to know General Ray Davis. Ladies and gentlemen, I give you a true American hero—General Raymond G. Davis.

IN OPPOSITION TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN—MARKING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 1998

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my abhorrence to all forms of violence against women and to speak out in support of International Women's Day. With many of our colleagues here in this body, I have worked to foster respect for civil rights here at home and human rights abroad.

In connection with the celebration of International Women's Day, Mr. Speaker, I want to call to the attention of my colleagues those justice seekers who are beginning to expose the roots of injustice, who are bringing to our attention human beings denied their uniqueness and their personhood. Our task as advocates for human rights is not only to continue the pursuit of justice, but also to realize that as we make progress, we must release ourselves from ignorance and biases that allow us to overlook some atrocities but not others. In this regard, Mr. Speaker, we must affirm that the rights of women are the rights of all individuals. I add my voice to that of the United Nations' World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna, 1993, which proclaims, "Women's rights are human rights."

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, women face a triple threat to their human rights. They are victimized by the construction of gender in their society. They are victimized by gender-based violence. And they are discriminated against by the structures of justice. Today, we must take action by properly addressing human rights violations against women. We must recognize gender-based violence in its various forms, and we must recognize these violent acts as human rights violations including, among others, sexual trafficking, economic discrimination, female genital mutilation, domestic violence, and rape.

These crimes against humanity are compounded by many victims' justifiable fear that their suffering will be disclaimed, that their suffering will be thrown out as invalid. Human rights violations against women are under-reported and under-emphasized. We must be

certain, Mr. Speaker, that violence against women is no longer silenced.

One of the most repugnant ways in which gender-based constructs discriminate against women, Mr. Speaker, is the trafficking of women and girls. They are reduced to mere economic sexual value to be sold and bartered. In the disturbing realm of sexual trafficking, women are forced into prostitution and coerced into marriage; they are often sold into bondage, where they are tortured and face degrading treatment as well as sexually transmitted diseases. Trafficking in women occurs across some well-patrolled international borders, and it is no coincidence that in many countries the institutions of justice, including the police, condone and profit from the trade in women.

In Thailand, there is a flourishing trade in Burmese women and girls; in India, the same trafficking occurs with Nepali women and girls. Bangladeshi women are lured to Pakistan by promises of a better life or abducted from their homes; they are then sold in clandestine settings to brothels where pimps threaten them with their illegal immigrant status and then denounce them for having sex outside of marriage.

Mr. Speaker, women are often subjected to gender-based economic discrimination and degradation because some states fail to recognize them as individuals outside of their material value. Economic discrimination against women makes them particularly vulnerable to harassment and abuse. Women are now increasingly important to the economies of most countries, but at the same time, many countries neglect women's rights as laborers. Women in the workplace are exploited and abused in a number of ways relating specifically to their sex.

As the majority of workers in the Maquiladoras, the export-processing factories along the U.S.-Mexico border, women must engage in a gender-specific fight to gain equal protection in the labor market. Most women who work in Maquiladoras do so because they are less well-educated and lack opportunities to gain necessary qualifications for other jobs. As a condition of employment, women applicants are routinely required to give urine samples for pregnancy tests. If a worker becomes pregnant and this is discovered by her boss, she is frequently forced to resign. Female workers may be harassed and mistreated, given more physically difficult tasks, and often forced to stand while working.

Furthermore, when a Mexican woman is a victim of sex discrimination, she has few avenues of legal redress. The Mexican justice system fails to protect women's reproductive health. The economic disincentive of regulating the manufacturing sector, which is the excuse given for failing to take action to protect women, is a poor excuse for failing to act.

Sexual discrimination in the workplace is reinforced by the lack of economic opportunity for women in many countries. Fear of losing a job reinforces a woman's inability to seek redress of her grievances. These acts of abuse are intolerable as women are forced into an outrageous choice between their legitimate human rights and their jobs.

In time of war or periods of social unrest, Mr. Speaker, violence toward women is intensified. As a Co-Chair of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, I stepped forward with the horrifying story of the treatment of women